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Industry Canada

Working with Rural Canadians

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Canada

No matter what corner of the country they call home, or where they study, work and shop, Canadians can count on Industry Canada to protect their rights, promote their interests and help them prepare for opportunities in the 21st century.



Connecting Canadians

Technological change and advances in information technology have made the world a much smaller place. For the one-third of Canadians living in rural areas — some nine million people — the information and communications revolution means they no longer have to be disadvantaged by distance from major centres or isolated by their geography and climate.

The Government of Canada is committed to helping Canadians connect to the Information Highway and acquire the skills they will need to successfully compete in the new global economy. *Connecting Canadians* is the federal government's vision and plan to make Canada the most connected country in the world by the year 2000.

Connecting Canadians is helping to provide individuals, schools, libraries, small and large businesses, rural and Aboriginal communities, public institutions, and all levels of government with new opportunities for learning, interacting, doing business and developing their social and economic potential across distances great and small.

Connecting Canadians consists of a six-part agenda for national leadership:

- 1) Canada On-line:** providing all Canadians, including those in rural and remote communities, with the opportunity to access a world-leading Information Highway infrastructure.
- 2) Smart Communities:** using information technology to develop local economic opportunity and connect local governments, schools, businesses, citizens, and health and social services.
- 3) Canadian Content On-line:** increasing the availability of Canadian content on-line — content that reflects Canadian values, achievements and aspirations, and makes Canada a leading-edge supplier of on-line content and applications to the world.
- 4) Electronic Commerce:** creating the legal and regulatory framework that will encourage greater use of electronic commerce transactions by business and consumers and make Canada a location of choice for the development of electronic commerce products and services.
- 5) Canadian Governments On-line:** putting government services on-line to provide Canadians with better access to government information and programs.
- 6) Promoting a Connected Canada to the World:** promoting Canada as a leading-edge economy, thereby making Canada more attractive to foreign investors and establishing Canada as a global hub of the knowledge-based economy.

Industry Canada contributes to this agenda through initiatives like the following:

- The *Community Access Program* is connecting 5000 rural and remote communities and up to 5000 urban centres to the Internet. These public on-ramps to the Information Highway are located in community centres, public libraries and schools.

- *Canada's SchoolNet* is helping to connect all of Canada's 16 500 schools, 3400 public libraries and 450 First Nations schools to the Internet by the end of the 1998 fiscal year. SchoolNet contains hundreds of Internet-based learning resources and is providing vital tools for educators and students to promote the acquisition of skills needed to compete in the global, knowledge-based economy.
- *Computers for Schools* supplies Canada's schools and libraries with donated computers and software packages. In order to equip today's youth with tomorrow's skills, Industry Canada has challenged Canadian governments and businesses to donate 250 000 computers — one for every Canadian classroom.
- The *Voluntary Sector Network Support Program (VolNet)* will connect 10 000 voluntary organizations to the Internet and to each other. This initiative will enhance the technological capacity of this sector and enable it to better serve the needs of Canadians.
- *Strategis* (<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca>), Canada's largest business information Web site, provides businesses and individuals — no matter where they're located — with useful, up-to-date on-line information on local and foreign markets, commodities, companies, small business support, economic forecasts and more.
- The *Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education (CANARIE)* is an industry-led, not-for-profit consortium dedicated to speeding the emergence of Canada's information revolution. CANARIE's mission is to build the next-generation high performance research network (CA*Net 3), the world's first national optical Internet, and to stimulate the development of advanced networking products and services.



Nurturing the Rural Economy

Industry Canada encourages the home-grown capabilities of small communities by helping rural Canadians use knowledge, technology and entrepreneurial skills to capitalize on opportunities in an increasingly competitive global economy. The department, along with its partners within the Industry Portfolio, offers a wide range of services to small businesses — the engine of the new economy — to help them achieve their potential. Some of these services are:

Financial support: The *Business Development Bank of Canada* and *Small Business Loans Act* help with start-up, research and development, productivity improvements or expansion costs. The Canada Community Investment Plan brings risk capital to growing firms outside major financial centres.

Market intelligence: *Canada Business Service Centres* provide information on export, trade and market opportunities, while *Strategis* — Canada's leading business and consumer information Web site at <http://strategis.ic.gc.ca> — provides timely and critical information tools and services to help businesses compete effectively, and showcases Canadian capabilities to the world.

Community economic development: *Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs)* and, in Atlantic Canada, *Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs)* receive significant funding from the Government of Canada to assist rural and small-town Canadians to develop and diversify their local economies and support new or existing local businesses with financing, business counselling and other services. CFDCs and CBDCs are community-based organizations governed by local volunteer boards drawn from the private sector, other community organizations and local governments. They operate in partnership with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, Industry Canada/FedNor, and Western Economic Diversification Canada.

- The *SchoolNet Youth Employment Initiative* hires young graduates to work with schools and libraries to connect them to SchoolNet and the Internet and to facilitate the integration of information technology in the learning process.
- The *Community Access Program* is helping connect up to 10 000 access sites in rural, remote and urban communities to the Internet by the end of the fiscal year 2000. This will provide rural Canadians with access to a wealth of on-line resources and opportunities. These public on-ramps to the Information Highway can be found in community centres, public libraries and schools.
- *Information Highway, Science and Entrepreneurship Camps* provide meaningful, short-term work experience that encourages young people to develop their interest and skills in technology, science and entrepreneurship.
- The *SchoolNet Digital Collections Program* contracts with firms, institutions, associations and federal agencies and departments to hire youth (15 to 30 years of age) from across Canada to convert important Canadian content into digital collections for display on the Information Highway.

How Can Industry Canada Serve You?

Find out more by contacting:

The Industry Canada office nearest you.

Check your telephone directory for local or toll-free numbers.

<http://info.ic.gc.ca>

Industry Canada's on-line business and consumer information service *Strategis*.

1-800-328-6189

<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca>



Canada Business Service Centres in each province and territory. Service is available in person, by phone, on the Web or by toll-free fax-on-demand.

Check your local telephone directory for details.

<http://www.cbsc.org>

Canadian Technology Network

<http://ctn.nrc.ca>

Your Guide to Government of Canada Services and Support for Small Business

1-800-761-5133

<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/smeguide>

SchoolNet

1-800-268-6608

<http://www.schoolnet.ca>

SchoolNet Digital Collections Program

1-800-465-7766

<http://www.schoolnet.ca/collections>

Computers for Schools Program

1-800-268-6608

<http://www.schoolnet.ca/cfs-ope>

Community Access Program

1-800-268-6608

<http://cap.unb.ca>

Information Highway, Science and Entrepreneurship Camps

1-800-268-6608

National Graduate Register

1-800-964-7763

<http://ngr.schoolnet.ca>

International trade and investment: *The International Trade Centres and Regional Trade Networks* provide businesses with the information, skills and tools they need to become export-ready or to enable them to expand to new foreign markets.

Expert advice: The *Canadian Technology Network* links federal and provincial government laboratories and agencies, universities, community colleges, industry associations, technology centres and economic development agencies. Together, these organizations provide innovative Canadian companies with quick and personal access to expertise, advice and information on how to meet technological and related business challenges.



Looking Out for Rural Consumers

Industry Canada's marketplace policies and programs provide rural Canadians with the information and confidence they need to go about their business. At the same time, they provide equitable and consistent rules for companies doing business everywhere in Canada.

The department administers dozens of pieces of legislation covering a range of areas, including:

- bankruptcy
- competition policy
- consumer information
- consumer packaging and labelling
- consumer products
- electricity and natural gas meters
- environmental labelling guidelines
- incorporation
- measurement accuracy

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- misleading advertising
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- patents, trademarks and copyright
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- precious metals and gemstones
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- radio frequency licensing
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- textile fibre and care labelling.
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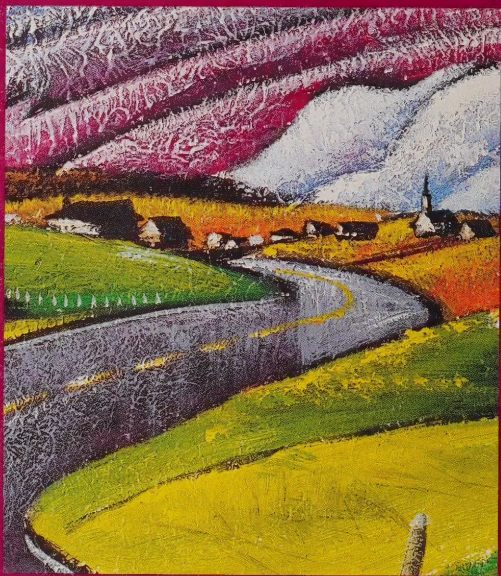
Creating Opportunities

for Young Rural Canadians

We live in a world where employability is increasingly linked to the use of technology. Industry Canada's programs for young rural Canadians respond to this reality by helping provide them with access to the skills and tools they need to find their way in today's complex and demanding economy. Industry Canada's contributions to the *Youth Employment Strategy* include the following:

- The *National Graduate Register* is a national Internet database that quickly matches employers' precise needs with the skills of young job seekers. It offers senior secondary and post-secondary students greater access to employers and jobs across Canada, and provides efficient and cost-effective recruiting for employers.
- The *Student Connection Program* matches college and university students trained in computer sciences with 50 000 small business and non-profit organizations in need of training on the Internet.

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